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In this memoir Dr. Shufeldt gives particular attention to the osteology of the *Geococcyx californianus*; most of the plates are well executed, especially those of the skull and pelvis, which structures receive detailed attention in the text. Taking *Geococcyx* as a basis for comparison a number of different types are considered, as *Crotophaga*, *Centropus*, *Diplopterus*, *Coccyzus*, and others. It is of interest to note that in *Coccyzus* the trachial rings are as completely ossified as are any of the trachial rings among the *Passeres*. There is also herein included some notes on the osteology of a nestling of the *Coccyzus americanus*. At the end of the paper there is a "Synopsis of the Principal Osteological Characters of the three subfamilies of of the United States Cuculidæ"; which probably will be found quite useful, and finally Dr. Shufeldt closes the subject with a very brief but none the less interesting discussion of cuculine kinships.

W. E. R.

Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture, 1900. The value of this publication to the people it reaches is undoubtedly great. 500,000 copies are issued yearly. Ornithologically, two papers interest us. The first: *How Birds Affect the Orchard*, p. 291-304. By F. E. L. Beal, B. S., gives an informal annotated list of some birds important to the fruit grower, which include Woodpeckers, Titmice, Nuthatches, Brown Creeper, Cuckoos, Baltimore Oriole, Warblers, Vireos, Birds of Prey, and Shrikes. Under the somewhat misleading subtitle of "Birds Harmful to the Orchard," we have the Purple and House Finches, Robin, Catbird and Cedar Waxwing. Although the varieties of fruit eaten, extent of damage, and localities affected are cited in the text; the wisdom of so placing some of our Eastern birds, particularly the Robin, in this category might well be questioned, as even the qualifying afterthought expressed in the investigator's belief "that the damage is usually caused by an abnormal abundance of a species within a limited territory," cannot wholly efface the impression already received. The omission of the European House Sparrow, which unquestionably destroys a greater variety and quantity of cultivated fruits in many sections of the country than all the native

species together, is perhaps unfortunate. *The Food of Nestling Birds*, p. 411-436, by Sylvester D. Judd, Ph. D., goes into the subject pretty thoroughly. It is surprising what a large amount of valuable information the writer has placed in order. A number of diagrams illustrating the proportion of food of both nestling and adult of many of our common birds show the comparative value at a glance, where a mere statement of percentage would fail nine times out of ten. Several plates from photographs taken of young in nest also appear. In conclusion he says: "It will be observed that whatever the character of the food of the adult bird, the young, excepting those of Doves and Pigeons, are at first fed on animal diet, and that this diet is gradually changed, where change is necessary, to conform to that of the mature bird. This is probably due to the fact that animal food has a higher nutritive value and is more easily digested than the available vegetable food. As nestlings increase in weight from one-fifth to one-half daily, and at certain stages of growth require daily more than their own weight in insects, it is essential that their food should be readily obtainable. Spiders, grasshoppers, caterpillars and crickets answer these requirements very well and are a favorite nestling food with many of passerine or perching birds. Birds that are largely vegetarian mingle fruit or grain in constantly increasing quantities with the insects fed to their young, though insects usually remain the chief component of the food until maturity is nearly reached. But these birds generally substitute such insects as hard beetles, carabids, dung-beetles, may-beetles and weevils for the softer food of other perching birds. The caterpillars selected are generally such hairless kinds as canker worms, cutworms, and army worms, all of which are serious pests. But hairy caterpillars are eaten to a certain extent." F. L. B.